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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at community services in the junior college, particularly cultural affairs. The nature of the community must be defined before an effective program can be organized. The college can then determine the area of services to be offered. Cultural programs are considered to be those offering lectures, films, exhibits, theater, and so on. Interviews were conducted with directors of community services at seven varied community colleges. All had lecture series of varying scopes. The College Association for Public Events and Services was the booking agent for the series. Colleges with comprehensive programs offered art and science exhibits. Film series were the most popular cultural programs, as even isolated colleges are able to contract for them. Theater programs, performed by college drama classes or by community members, are usually successful. Some colleges stage fine arts festivals; some operate planetariums; others sponsor community chorus and orchestra groups. A successful cultural program will improve public relations and promote community support for the college. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (MS)

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Cultural Affairs

A Vital Phase of Community Services

A Seminar Paper

Submitted in Partial Satisfaction of the

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by

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INTRODUCTION

During today's troubled times, attacks are being voiced on vertually everything and at all levels. Even the most sacred and respected traditions are being attacked. In many instances there may be ample justification for criticism and denouncement. This being the case, there are members of the community who believe all the demonstrations, problems, and faults that exist lie directly at the doorstep of the schools. Criticism does not find a stopping place at only one educational level; the entire profession from primary through higher education is under attack.

It is this writer's opinion that to a certain degree the schools are at fault. They are not necessarily at fault for not educating students or by being the cause of the sorted ills attributed to them; the schools are at fault for not properly informing the public as to their role in relation to the total concept of society.

There are many ways in which the role of the school may be presented to the community at large. The role may be dramatized by empirical evidence demonstrated by its students and graduates. Public relations is also a useful tool for informing the public. A community

services program offers still another method of presenting the school to the community*.

It is the purpose of this paper to look at the community services in the community college in general and examine one of its critical programs--cultural affairs.

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*In many college districts, the public relations program is housed within the community services structure.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

A VITAL PHASE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The community college has become an important driving force in our society. With its accelerated rate of growth, which has burst forth since the 1920's, the community college has spread to such a degree and is in the process of continuous expansion that eventually most every person within the United States will be within commuting distance of an institution of higher learning. The fact that the founding and growth of the community college is native to this country has given a degree of flexibility that heretofor has not been witnessed (16:1).

This being the case, the community college has a unique identity. It is able to recognize and deal with the problems and needs of its community. It is able to be sensitive to those things that are deemed to be important in that locale. Fields states that the commuity college is committed by philosophy to the specific ourposes of serving all members of the community (5:90), while Medsker has said that it is hardly conceivable that an institution would long remain in a community and not feel the obligation and challenge to perform services (10:83). It has further been stated that

the community school is equally concerned about the development of the community in order to improve the quality of living and the development of individuals to the limits of their capacities (1.34).

The community school shares the responsibility with its citizens for developing the educational program and serves as a community center for all citizens of the community (11:413). The philosophy of the community school recognizes that the educative process includes identification with, participation in, and the critical appraisal of ones culture (4:57).

It has been the concept of the community school that gave rise to the two year community college. The community college has found as one of its critical roles, the examination of educational needs of its locale and the taking of steps through its various resources and programs to satisfy those needs. This has led to the community services programs at many institutions (6:3).

Community services is a relatively recent development within the community college. The planning and management of the program is a responsibility that will become increasingly important. So important is the program that Thornton states that the scope and adequacy of community services determines whether or not the college merits the title "community" junior

college (17:66). Therefore, this aspect of the program should be given as much thought and consideration as some of the formal academic services (12:56).

Community services go beyond the customary limits of college programs. In the community college they help solve current problems of both persons and organizations within the community (15:221).

The American Association of Junior Colleges has stated five principles for establishing a community services program:

1. Identification of desirable services not being provided by other agencies.
2. Determination that the community college is an appropriate agency to provide the service.
3. Determination that the community college has resources or can secure them to provide the services.
4. Determination as to how the services can be provided.
5. Evaluation of the services to see that they are doing what they are purported to do, and to determine that a need continues to exist (6:4).

Several authors feel quite strongly that a distinction must be made quite clear that there is a difference between community services and adult education. Some of the arguments are that if the two are considered to be singular, the director may become so immersed in details associated with adult education that he may not have time to place emphasis on other phases (10:83).

Woods states that community colleges require more than "cake decorating courses" as being a community services program. The line of least resistance is to add any type of new course when ten or more students want it--providing that space, funds, teacher, and equipment are available (18:47). This does not truly fulfill community service responsibility. Only a small segment of the citizenry would be affected by such a program.

Community services did not really get a good foothold until the 1930's. Prior to this period the number of colleges were so few that the true concept of the community college did not exist. What did exist were a few two year liberal arts colleges, trade schools, and extensions of the secondary schools. But with the rapid growth that started after 1920, the community college came closer to its community; thus, the community services programs followed.

According to Henry:

> It is natural to look to the public junior college for many and diverse types of service to groups and to individuals not enrolled in classes or courses. The junior college is a community centered institution... The values of college service to the community are many and varied. They include increasing the productive efficiency of agriculture and industry, improving the functioning of communities and community organizations, contributing to the health and physical well-being of citizens, and enriching the cultural, aesthetic, and moral life of the community (9:318).

Harlacher states that the community services concept is based upon four basic considerations: 1) In a community college the campus is the length and breadth of the junior college district or service area; 2) The program should be so designed as to bring the community to the college and take the college program out into the community; 3) The educational program of the college should not be limited to formalized classroom instruction; 4) The community college recognizes its reponsibility as a catalyst in community development and self improvement (6:6).

The courtship of the community and the community college is based upon citizen participation and college-community interaction (8:-14). Harlacher goes further to state that citizens should participate in the planning and maintenance of the program, and the college, recognizing that it must be part of the commuity and not just in it, must participate in the life of the community.

A common method of utilizing the citizens within the community is by setting up various committees and groups whose function it is to recommend improvements of the educational program so that the entire community will benefit to a greater degree. These citizen groups, even though highly effective, do have certain limitations,

and it is imperative that these limitations be made clear so there will be no misunderstanding. Some of the principles regarding citizen groups are:

1. The governing board cannot delegate its legal responsibility for decisions to any lay group;

2. The chief administrator and his staff should be available as consultants and for staff work;

3. Citizen committees should not be used as rubber stamps;

4. Committee members should be carefully selected in terms of the objective of the committee and the competencies of the individuals;

5. It is a good practice to have the group develop a simple policy statement as a guide for their activity;

6. An administrator should meet with an advisory group for the first time and carefully structure the situation in advance and prepare alternative plans for presentation (6:9).

Despite certain limitations and restrictions that are inherent in a citizens' advisory group, participation should be utilized to the fullest, for the thinking of the community at large usually is brought forth. Too often those associated with the college overlook key items of importance not because they are insensitive but because they are either unaware or are so close to

a situation that it is difficult to note various items vital to the community.

An effective community services program can be built only after a thorough understanding of the community is gained. The college may use an advisory board of lay citizens or set up a specialized survey in order to find out the needs of the community and at the same time avoid duplication of efforts that have been initiated by other agencies.

In gathering data for this paper, it was found that those colleges that had the most extensive community services programs had several lay groups offering suggestions for improvement and for new programs for the community and the college. All schools felt that use of advisory groups could help to improve the image of the college and give the community those programs that were felt to be important. Even though several schools did not have advisory groups established, plans had been formulated for the establishment of advisory groups.

There is no need for information gathered by advisory groups or surveys to be formalized. The goal is for facts regarding the community to be made known (6:26).

Points to be defined in understanding the community include the nature of the community, history and tra-

ditions, population characteristics, community business and industrial life, organized groups, local government, recreation, and the arts (3:22).

When data concerning the above mentioned areas has been collected, the college will be able to identify problems of the community, determine areas of services to be offered, and set up a program of action.

Harlacher has stated that he is surprised that there has not been a more comprehensive program of wide spread growth in the community services programs of the California community colleges. With the legal bases established by the California legislature, the colleges are able to swing open the door for a multitude of programs. Yet in Harlacher's appraisal only a limited number of colleges have undertaken the task of total community involvement (6:30).

School districts in California may create under statute what in essence may be a separate community services district with boundaries coterminous with the school district boundaries. This was formed for cultural and recreational purposes with provision for a special tax which may be levied by the school district to finance the cultural and recreational programs. The tax rate may be up to five cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

A review of some of the major pieces of legislation regarding community colleges demonstrates legislative opinion in this area. In 1917, the California legislature approved the Civic Center Act. This act provided for the community use of school facilities.

The Recreation Enabling Act of 1939 provided for the operation of extensive recreation programs by school districts, or jointly by school districts and cities, or by other districts. The Community Services Tax of 1951, as ammended in 1959 and 1961, set up the legal maximum levy of five cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for civic center and recreational purposes (3:2).

In relation to use of college facilities, Harlacher states that most districts set up three catagories: 1) Free use--those organizations which qualify under the Civic Center Act; 2) Minimum service charge--organizations which charge admission fees for welfare purposes; 3) Maximum service charge--commercial use by organizations which do not qualify under the Civic Center Act (6:34).

Administrative leadership and the manner in which it is coordinated is a key factor in the effectiveness of the community services program (10:55). Harlacher feels that instead of having the administration of the program scattered among several administrators, it

should be directed by one person who is on an equal level with instruction, student personnel, and business services. Harlacher goes on emphatically to state that the director of the community services program is charged with the direction of a program recognized as one of the major purposes and functions of the community college.

Reynolds states that the nature of the community services program dictates departure from traditional concepts regarding college functions. He suggests two characteristics of community services activities: 1) Each activity is provided to help satisfy a genuine educational need in the community; 2) The chief beneficiaries of each of the activities are citizens of the community (16:7). A list of examples of community services set forth by Medsker includes workshops, forums, institutes, research and advisory assistance to community groups, cultural and recreational activities including community music and theatre groups, and wide spread use of the college plant for community activities (16:78).

The balance of this paper will concern itself with only one area of Medsker's several examples--that is the area of college sponsored programs of a cultural nature. As a point of reference, cultural programs will be considered to consist of lectures, forums, fine arts series, exhibits, film series, college-community

music and theatre groups, literary programs, children's theatre, and use of specialized facilities such as planetariums, museums, and science centers primarily for elementary and secondary students of the community.

Harlacher, in his dissertation, quite carefully explored critically all avenues for the establishment of an effective community services program. He catagorized the program by objective stating that the community services program is basically composed of establishing four objectives and constructing a program so that the objectives would be satisfied. Harlacher's four objective areas are: community use of college facilities, community educational services, cultural and recreational services, and institutional development. Each of these areas is extremely broad; therefore, attention will be focused only on the cultural affairs objective which is stated as "to contribute to and promote the cultural, intellectual, and social life of the college district and community and to develop skills for the profitable use of leisure time" (7:117).

It was reported by 91 per cent of the respondents of Harlacher's questionnaire that cultural affairs received major emphasis in the community services program. It was also stated that in colleges located in population centers of over 50,000, a great deal more emphasis was placed on this segment of the program

than any other. Generally speaking, although a few exceptions did occur, the larger thepopulation center, the greater the emphasis on cultural programs.

Lecture Series

Included in this grouping are college sponsored public affairs forums and lectures. These events usually include moted personalities and attract large audiences. In general, programs of this nature are geared to the community at large rather than to smaller specific interest groups.

In gathering data for this paper, interviews were conducted with directors of community services at seven community colleges. An attempt was made to get as thorough a cross section as possible of different types of colleges with differing problems and attitudes. Among the seven colleges were very large schools as well as small schools, long established institutions as well as one only two years old, central urban area schools as well as those remotely located, schools of differing ethnic and economic backgrounds, and schools singularly composing a district as well as multi-campus districts.

Each of the schools visited had to some degree a lecture series. Two schools had an extensive program with well known speakers on their calendar. Two schools from a multi-campus district stated that their lecture program received a deep cut because the board of trustees

felt that an imbalance of political opinion was being presented; yet a lecture series still existed. One college had a very limited series, but it was scheduled primarily for students rather than the community at large. The other schools were located somewhere between the extremes.

The driving force in the popularity of the lecture series as a means of presenting programs to the community apparently stems from the development of an organization named CAPES--College Association for Public Events and Services. It is through this organization, which acts as a booking agent, that community colleges are able to band together to get noted lecturers and public figures to make appearances at small schools, in remote areas, or in areas distant from the speaker's home. By scheduling a series of lectures for a speaker at colleges relatively close together, expenses are greatly reduced and smaller schools are able to hear individuals they ordinarily might not be able to attract.

Each of the schools visited used CAPES as a booking agent for their lecture series.

Fine Arts Series

In this sector might be found concerts, drama, ballet, modern dance, as well as other special cultural events staged for community and college. Most schools have a fine arts series to a certain degree. The pro-

grams may vary from simply having a drama class present a play and the college band present a concert where the community is welcome to having an extensive program with well known performers or even a major symphony orchestra in concert.

In the area of fine arts as in the lecture series many programs are set up by using CAPES as a booking agent. It has been found that newer schools, schools located in remote areas, or schools where the ethnic background of the community is primarily non-European, this area is not pursued to a great degree. Whether the schools believe that there will not be support or if they are channeling their efforts toward known successful programs of specific interest to the community is uncertain. It is felt, however, that in those areas where certain cultural appreciations are lacking, little effort is being made to broaden experiences. In general, there appears to be every effort to proceed with what has been successful and little effort is demonstrated to move past that point.

Film Series

A film series of some sort is one of the most popular of all cultural programs. Even isolated colleges are able to contract for film series. At two of the schools visited that had the most limited programs in community services, each had a film series.

Film series generally are classified into areas of classics, art films, foreign films, museum films, historical films, and travelogues and documentaries. There is, in general, fine acceptance if careful planning is made and admission is not excessive.

Gallery

A number of community colleges maintain galleries or gallery programs for the benefit of both students and community. Programming often includes art exhibits--painting, sculpture, crafts; science exhibits, photography exhibits, and features community exhibits as well as travelling professional shows (8:121). Of the colleges visited, only those that are well known for their comprehensive programs conducted gallery programs. Each school did, however, display works of art created in classes. But this author does not believe that this of itself is enough to constitute this segment of the community services program.

Community Theatre

Community theatre is usually made up of members of the community under the supervision of the college. Some colleges also include theatre programs performed by drama classes for community and student consumption in this area. A newer concept is that of presenting a children's theatre. In this type of program the school puts on special theatrical programs designed especially

for children in their early school years. Groups of students may be either brought to the college as perhaps part of a field trip or parents may bring children to special weekend showings.

Community theatre in general is very seccessful and is warmly accepted. It is a major contributor to good public relations with the community and lower levels of education.

Festival of the Arts

A number of community colleges sponsor festivals of the arts. These festivals include fine arts festivals, music festivals, drama festivals, and performing arts festivals including art, drama, music, and ballet. Festivals are usually staged for both college students and the community during the summer months or during the academic year. Occasionally the community college joins with community groups in the sponsorship of a community-wide festival of arts (8:122). Apparently the most critical item in the presentation of a festival of arts is thorough planning, for most programs when well organized are received quite warmly.

Planetarium

A number of community colleges operate planetariums as part of their program of community services. These programs in recent years have become ever so popular as a result of heightened interest in space exploration.

As a result, more and more schools are establishing planetariums and are providing programs for the public. Most of the programs, however, are geared to primary and secondary children. As part of their scientific studies, children are bussed to the college and are treated to a planetarium show. With proper background material presented at the primary or secondary school, the planetarium programs are extremely successful.

Community Chorus and Orchestra

These groups are performing groups composed of community members primarily under the supervision of college personnel. Usually those that are involved are quite enthusiastic even though their numbers may be small. Participation is usually considered a hobby, but great pride comes in presenting concert works to the community. These programs are usually found in colleges that have an extensive community services program.

Publicity for programs is handled in a variety of ways. Of the colleges visited those with broader, more conprehensive programs utilized mailing lists to publicize their events. In addition, for many events advertising space is purchased in community newspapers as well as in large metropolitan papers. The smaller schools or those with a limited program utilized primarily fliers and pamphlets placed in heavily trafficked

areas of the community. Events were also given publicity in community newspaper columns informing the citizens of happenings at the college. Those colleges that are located away from the larger metropolitan areas also used public service time on local radio stations to publicize events.

It would seem from talking with individuals in charge of community services at various schools that direct mailing is the most efficient and effective form of publicity, but before the expense can be undertaken in this fashion, the community must be alerted that the college does have community service events. One new community college requests through public service means that those who are interested in being put on the college's mailing list write or telephone the school. This is an attempt to form a nucleus and build a clientele from that point.

To sum up, Harlacher states that a comprehensive and continuous program of community services is based upon community needs and development of citizen participation. This will have a profound effect upon the image of the community college. He goes on to state that a program of community services will make it possible for the community college to fulfill one of its major purposes. In so doing, it will create a community center...a focal point for the community...

a catalyst for problem solving...an institution of considerable influence in the community (6:37).

The influence of the school in a particular community is closely related to its prestige in that community (14:216). The community services program to an important degree determines the extent of community understanding and support for the college (17:66).

The community college is unique. It has built in public relations if it fulfills its major functions. Good public relations is a natural by-product of a good community services program.

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